

REMARKS

The Office Action indicated that Claims 19, and 26-29 would be accepted if rewritten in independent form. Independent Claims 19 and 26 have been amended accordingly. Claims 27-29 depend from amended Claim 26, and are also thus allowable.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1-18, 20-25, and 30-39.

Claims 1, 2, 4-12, 17, 18, 20, 30 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chen et al. (U.S. Patent 6,591,324). Applicants traverse this rejection. Chen et al. describes a single computer system comprised of individual, hot-swappable components. In contrast, the present invention describes a cluster computer device that interconnects multiple independently-functioning computers, allowing components of the computers to be used as shared resources. In order to expedite allowance of the claims, Claims 1, 30, and 32, which are independent claims, have been amended to include the feature of a plurality of hot-swappable CPU modules that allow components of the computers to be used as shared resources, where each CPU module is an independently-functioning stand-alone computer. These features are supported in the specification. For example, page 3, lines 1 supports the feature of each CPU module being a stand-alone computer; page 14, lines 20-22 support the feature of an ethernet module being a resource shared by the CPU modules; and page 14, lines 8-11 support the feature of a power module being a resource shared by all other modules.

Thus, Claims 1, 30, and 32, as amended, overcome Chen et al. Claims 2, 4-12, 17, 18, and 20 depend directly or indirectly on Claim 1, and are thus also allowable. Claim 31 depends on Claim 30, and is thus also allowable. Claim 33 depends on Claim 32, and is thus also allowable.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al. and Konstad (U.S. Patent 6,591,324). However, neither Chen et al. nor Konstad teach the feature of a

plurality of hot-swappable CPU modules that allow components of the computers to be used as shared resources, where each CPU module is an independently-functioning computer. As Claim 3 depends on amended Claim 1, which includes this feature, Claim 3 is also allowable.

Claims 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al. and Pierre-Louis et al. However, neither Chen et al. nor Pierre-Louis et al. teach the feature of a plurality of hot-swappable CPU modules that allow components of the computers to be used as shared resources, where each CPU module is an independently-functioning computer. As Claims 13-16 depend on amended Claim 1, which include this feature, Claims 13-16 are also allowable.

Claim 21 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Claim 21 has been amended in a manner that overcomes the Office Action's rejection, as the words "may be" has been replaced with the word "are".

Claims 22-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al. and Ikeda. However, neither Chen et al. nor Ikeda teach the feature of a plurality of hot-swappable CPU modules that allow components of the computers to be used as shared resources, where each CPU module is an independently-functioning computer. As Claims 22-25 depend on amended Claim 1, which include this feature, Claims 22-25 are also allowable.

Claims 34-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Pierre-Louis et al. (U.S. Patent 6,421,777). Applicants traverse this rejection. However, in order to expedite allowance of the claims, Applicants have amended Claims 34-36 to depend on amended Claim 30, which, as described earlier, is allowable. Claims 34-36 are also thus allowable.

Claims 37-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ikeda (U.S. Patent 5,161,097). Applicants traverse this rejection. Ikeda describes using a non-isolated DC-DC converter to provide power to a load or device. In contrast, Applicants' invention is a power

distribution solution that distributes DC directly through a single voltage. That single voltage is then converted as necessary by each component using a DC-DC converter. For clarification purposes, Claim 37 has been amended to include this feature, and is allowable. This feature is described in the specification. For example, page 4, lines 4-11 support the feature of distributing power directly through a single voltage. Claims 38-39 depend on amended Claim 37, and are thus also allowable.

The Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE DRAWINGS

New drawings are submitted herewith in accordance with the requirements of the Office Action.